An Essay
on
The Mucous Membranes
by
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To one on the very threshold of the profession, would be presented many obstacles & difficulties which would be almost insurmountable, in the prosecution of a subject connected with the science in which he is yet a mere tyro, if it were not allowed him to make large drafts upon the observation and experience of others, and even if he were competent to the task, still from his necessarily restricted knowledge and limited means, much time and labour would be expended upon the one subject to the exclusion of others of perhaps equal importance.

Medicine is a Science of Observation, and, he who would improve it, and enlarge the sphere of its usefulness, must have already been an attentive observer of nature's operations both in health, and desease, with these sentiments I enter upon the subject of the following pages, under the full impression that the greatest indulgence will be exhibi

-ted by the faculty towards me,-

The Mucous Membranes are so named from the fluid which constantly lubricates their surfaces, altho' occupying so important a part in the structure of the human economy, from the intimate relations they bear to other parts of the system, and on account of their being from their extended surface and exposed situation, the frequent point of attack for deleterious external agents, yet very little attention was turned to their intimate structure functions and pathology, untill the time of Pinel, whose observations were principally made however, at the bed side of his patients, the correctness of his views were fully confirmed by an able & successful coadjutor, the illustrious Bichat, who reduced them to demonstration, by multiplied post mortem examinations, by giving to the world the result of his researches in this part of anatomy, he

has obtained for himself a halo of imperishable fame. the profession cannot too sincerely regret the loss of his great and valuable talents, altho' he had scarcely reached the meridian of life, yet was his genius at its midday splendor, he was already looked upon by all Europe as the favourite child of science, and the brightest ornament of our profession, his name already held an exalted rank among those distinguished for mental endowment, and scientific acquirement. to his labours are we chiefly indebted for our knowledge of the tissue which will constitute the subject of this essay, from him therefore will I borrow largely. — The Mucous Membrane lines all the outlets of the body, in it are exhibited some of the most conspicuous phenomena of life, as Respiration, digestion secretion, excretion &c, it has received various

names expressive of structure, as Glandulous Membrane, villous Membrane &c. that which lines the nasal fossa, Pituitary Membrane. Bichat gives them a general division into Gastro-Pulmonary, and Genito-Urinary, besides which there is also a small insulated mucous surface lining the nipples, and lactiferous tubes, but which possesses the general characters of the others.

The Gastro-Pulmonary commences at the mouth nose, and anterior face of the eye, sending prolongations along the ducts to the Salivary glands, to the sinuses, forms the conjunctiva, which communicates with the nose by means of the Puncta lacrymalia and nasal duct, it sends a prolongation along the Eustachian tube, & penetrates the internal ear, it is continued to the Larynx, Trachea, and is spread upon the air cells of the Lungs, it penetrates into the Oesophagus and the Stomach, and spreads itself along the whole course of the Alimentary canal, from which however it sends two elongations, the one

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] was lead by observing that [illegible]
estimates were [illegible] [illegible]
the air during a [illegible] diffusing [illegible] to [illegible]
[illegible]

[illegible] Her opinion is [illegible] by many
other authorities, who maintain that [illegible]
no [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] by [illegible]
but a kind of [illegible] without [illegible] or [illegible]
[illegible] that the [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] creation takes place [illegible]
[illegible] but they never have been
[illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] with
[illegible] skin, it is found in the palate
[illegible] [illegible]
stomach and intestines, and also in the liver
gall bladder, and excretory ducts [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] it differs from the [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
it is more soft [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible]

Besides Blood-vessels there are [illegible]
[illegible] found in the [illegible]
[illegible] numerous glands, they are found either

within the corion, or between it and the subjacent structure. They consist [illegible] of a congeries of [illegible] [illegible] in [illegible]. [illegible] the surface of the membrane, [illegible] [illegible] which lubricates [illegible] [illegible] motion [illegible] [illegible] is always increased by the [illegible] foreign bodies, [illegible] irritation, [illegible] are [illegible] in the [illegible] secretion. [illegible] established in the Uterus. Bladder, Gall bladder, [illegible] [illegible] secreting [illegible] [illegible] also a [illegible] [illegible] vessels, [illegible] the substance of the tissue [illegible] on its surface to which is owing its redness. This is not uniform it is greatest in the nose, mouth &c. less so in the large Intestines, Bladder &c. they become brown in cases of suffocation, [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] membrane becomes inflamed it constitutes croup, it is accompanied with pain some slight fever [illegible] of the [illegible] is [illegible] times so severe as to exhaust the patient before it [illegible], it [illegible] more persistent then becomes natural, this [illegible] terminates in a very short time and [illegible] cheerfully. This disease is also subject to [illegible] condemned and will [illegible] some [illegible] state of the system. [illegible] frequent occurrence of [illegible] time and [illegible] the one left [illegible] the other, and both [illegible] sometimes produce ulceration of the lungs, or cause death, in [illegible]. [illegible] charge is [illegible] to this [illegible]. Its symptoms are [illegible] causes [illegible] to

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

the most common affection of the mucous lining of the intestines is colitis, presenting the same phenomena in this as in other parts of the mucous tissue. [illegible] the peristaltic motion is increased [illegible] state a [illegible] similar to that [illegible] [illegible] but if more intense it then becomes formidable and is known under the term dysentery. This is characterized by frequent griping stools, chiefly mucous sometimes mixed with blood, tenesmus. The [illegible] symptom Bichat considers as peculiar to the mucous membranes. Natural stools [illegible], and [illegible] in the form of [illegible], composed [illegible] sometimes [illegible] [illegible] similar to those of croup. This [illegible] to the [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] sometimes it terminates in [illegible] dysentery, in which there is [illegible] of all the [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] death.

[illegible] occurs about the
[illegible] place,
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

[illegible]

is a disease of less consequence than in Men, the Vagina is the seat of it in them. the Symptoms are nearly similar, being however, much milder. the mucous lining of the Vagina is liable to a disease very much resembling Gonorrhea, and which, indeed, it is difficult to distinguish from it, it is called Leucorrhea, or Fluor Albus. this exists independantly of any venereal Contamination, it is in its nature very analogous to Coryza,

The Mucous Membrane of the Uterus is frequently the seat of Hemorrhagy, this is produced by abortions, by any violent exertions, general plethora &c. they are most likely to occur during pregnancy, about the period of the fifth month, the discharge of blood is often very profuse, Cancer is a disease to which the Uterus is subject, taking place generally about the period of the cessation of the Menses. Fungi sometimes occur in the Uterus, they are often of very luxuriant growth, filling up the whole cavity of the Uterus, sometimes presenting

themselves at the labia, they are very vascular and bleed easily, they are also readily reproduced.

The Mucous Membrane of the bladder is often irritated producing a Catarrh. This disease is common with old people, there is discharged with the urine a large quantity of mucus.

Ulcers are sometimes found in the bladder, they are accompanied with pain, difficulty of voiding the urine, with some discharge of blood.

The mucous lining of the Pelvis of the Kidney and of the ureter, may also be in a state of irritation from the passage of a calculus -

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